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National Municipal League

THE LEAGUE'S BUSINESS

With the League Members.—*Leonard D. White,* after three years in Washington as United States civil service commissioner, has resigned to return to his post as professor of public administration at the University of Chicago.

The following members of the league appear among the prominent New York citizens recently appointed by Governor Herbert H. Lehman to serve as an unofficial advisory committee on the drafting of a new state constitution: *Charles Evans Hughes, Jr.,* son of Chief Justice Hughes and president of the New York County Lawyers Association; *Frank C. Moore,* secretary of the New York Association of Towns and a member of the New York State Commission for the Revision of the Tax Laws; and *George H. Hallett, Jr.,* associate secretary of the League and secretary of the New York Citizens Union.

Samuel S. Fels, honorary vice-president of the league, and State Senator *Dr. George Woodward,* for many years a member of the league, are members of the Philadelphia Charter Commission recently appointed by Governor Earle and the Pennsylvania legislature.

Dr. Harold W. Dodds, president of the league and of Princeton University, was recently created a Commander of the Order of King Leopold by Dr. Paul van Zeeland, Prime Minister of Belgium. At the same time—the 1937 commencement of Princeton University—Dr. Dodds conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws upon Dr. van Zeeland.

Charles P. Taft, member of the league's council and chairman of its committee on model state personnel law, was named by Miss Frances Perkins, secretary of labor, as chairman of the federal mediation board to conciliate the steel strike.

* * *

Dr. Clyde L. King Dies.—We are extremely sorry to learn of the death on June 17th of Dr. Clyde Lyndon King, a prominent member of the National Municipal League. Dr. King was professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania for the past seventeen years. He also held numerous governmental appointments, including the chairmanship of the tri-state milk commission appointed by the governors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware; milk price arbitrator for Pennsylvania; secretary of the commonwealth and secretary for revenue under Governor Gifford Pinchot of Pennsylvania; and chairman of the Pennsylvania Unemployment Committee. He was the author of numerous books and magazine articles and was a member of the American Economic Association, American Academy of Political and Social Science, the Political Science Association, and other similar organizations.

* * *

The League's Annual Meeting.— Please keep in mind the league's forty-third annual conference on government. The place is Rochester, New York; the time November 18th to 20th. A splendid local committee, whose members are listed below, will sponsor the meetings:

Chairman, Marion B. Folsom, treasurer of the Eastman Kodak Company and president of the Rochester Chamber of Commerce; *Vice-Chairman,* Harold W. Sanford, editor, *Democrat and Chronicle; Secretary,* W. Earl Weller, director of the Bureau of Municipal Research; Isaac Adler, former vice-mayor; City Comptroller Paul B. Aex; Harold Akerley; Mr. and Mrs. Wesley M. Angle; City Manager Harold W. Baker; Raymond N. Ball, vice-president, University of Rochester; Rev. Albert W. Beaven, president, Divinity School; Rabbi Philip Bernstein; Judge George H. Bodine, former head, Crime Prevention Committee; J. Franklin Bonner, county planning director; Charles W. Booth, president, Council of Civic Clubs; John P. Boylan, president, Rochester Telephone Corporation; Herbert W. Bramley, former president, Chamber of Commerce; Thomas E. Broderick, Republican county chairman; Carey Brown; Chancellor .James Burgan; George H. Clune, chairman, City Citizens Committee on Tax Delinquency; Sam Cooper, chairman, board of supervisors; John Curtin, chairman, special committee on tax delinquency; Donald Dailey, Democratic leader; George Dietrich; M. Herbert Eisenhart; Mark Ellingson, president, Mechanics Institute; Albert W. Fell, business manager, *Democrat and Chronicle;* Bishop David Lincoln Ferris; Bernard Finucane, Democratic leader; B. Forman; Louis S. Foulkes, former councilman; Tom Foulkes, civic leader.

Frank E. Gannett, president, Gannett Company; James E. Gleason; Miss Eleanor Good, president, Chamber Women's Organization; William H. Gorsline; Alonzo G. Grace, University of Rochester; Carl Hallauer, civic leader; Edward Harris; Vicar-General Rt. Rev. William H. Hart, acting head of Catholic Diocese; Sol Heumann, head, Community Chest; Jeremiah G. Hickey; Clarence E. Higgins, former comptroller; Arthur H. Ingle, Chamber of Commerce Civic Improvement Committee; Meyer Jacobstein, former congressman; Byron A. Johnson, president, City Club; Mrs. Leonard Jones, chairman, League of Women Voters; Miss Alice King, president, Business and Professional Women's Club; Oscar Kuolt, director, Council of Social Agencies; Clement G. Lanni, publisher, *La Stampa Unita*; Frank W. Lovejoy, president, Eastman Kodak Company; Arthur Lowenthal, civic leader.

Gilbert J. C. McCurdy; James D. McGill, president, Board of Education; A. S. Mertz, president, Convention and Publicity Bureau; Edward G. Miner, secretary, University of Rochester; Frank Moffett; John S. Murray; Miss Dora Neun, international president, Zonta Clubs; George

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Editorial Comment

August, 1937

NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW

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On the Education of Councilmen

THE success of the city manager plan rests perhaps more upon the relations between the council and the city manager than upon any single element unless it be the manager himself. Increasing irritation in these relations in a number of cities gives cause for serious consideration.

The problem arises in this way: All too often an aroused public opinion in a community will change the form of government to the city manager plan and elect well meaning citizens to the council who have little conception of the manager plan or how it should operate. Elected to public office for the first time, they take their responsibilities so seriously that they are apt to forget, if they ever knew, that the responsibility of a member of the legislative body under the manager form is legislative, not executive, and that the manager plan will succeed only if they concentrate their attention and thinking upon policy forming and *supervision* of execution—not execution itself.

It is possible that students of the subject have paid too little attention to the problem of the city manager in this situation. He is but one individual in surroundings not always completely harmonious bringing to bear the light of his special knowledge on the problems of the municipal administration. He is hired by the council. A veteran diplomat might well balk at an attempt by the city manager to tell the councilmen—his bosses—where their powers ended and his began. Yet there has been in some manager cities too much meddling in administration by members of the council and too much "passing the buck" to the manager on important decisions.

Perhaps we need a "committee on the education of councilmen"—it would be a first rate piece of adult education redounding immediately to the benefit of the community!

Who Is Behind It?

THE type of sponsorship behind the city manager plan or any other movement for improvement in government frequently can make or break the idea. This has happened so often that individuals or groups interested in such movements must be on guard not only against enemies without but also those possibly well-intentioned ones within.

In one great city today we find the disquieting situation of two powerful, high-minded newspapers opposing the city manager plan. Apparently their opposition is based solely on the fact that they don't like the politician who is attempting to assume leadership of the movement and they distrust his motives. The newspapers are so intent on preventing a personal victory by this man that they overlook the large group of non-

partisan, unselfish citizens who also favor the plan.

In another city the existing manager government is threatened by the growing suspicion that those who originally led the successful fight in its behalf are now playing politics just as selfishly as did the so-called "old crowd."

The time has not yet come when personalities are unimportant. The man who marks the ballot is still more inclined to vote for a personality than a principle. It has been proved over and over again that the city manager form of government has been most successful when the demand for reform comes from a large body of unselfish civic-minded citizens, usually under the leadership of a number of organizations not normally concerned with politics.

So it behooves those who are interested in definite accomplishment rather than simply stirring up a fuss to plan wisely, examine the motives of those who climb the bandwagon, and keep in mind where the trumps are as they play their cards.

Brains by Geography!

A READER has questioned our recent expression of scorn at the Lyons residence law, whereby appointments of city employees can be made only from among resident New Yorkers. He asked if any other city than New York would countenance officials from other cities.

One answer is that perhaps the best-governed city in the United States, Cincinnati, has had two exceptional non-resident experts for the all-important job of city manager—C. A. Dykstra and Colonel C. O. Sherrill—with results satisfactory to all except spoils politicians.

The large corporations and banks of New York, the universities and hospitals, needing expert services, pay no attention whatever to residence in going after their officials. The city itself, we believe, is entitled to as good service as any other corporation. To refuse to employ a superior person because he doesn't live here is rather like refusing to buy a better fire engine because it was not manufactured here.

Editorial, *New York World Telegram*, July 26, 1937

THE LEAGUE'S BUSINESS

(Continued from Page 382)

H. Nier, president, Bar Association; T. Carl Nixon; Henry O'Connell, president, Central Trades and Labor Council; Ernest A. Paviour, civic leader; Miss Ida Randle, president, Rochester Zonta Club; Bishop Bartel H. Reinheimer; W. H. Roberts, president, Engineering Society; Mrs. Robert Rowe, Rochester Branch American Association of University Women; Herman Russel.

Harold W. Sanford, editor, *Democrat and Chronicle;* Harper Sibley, former president, United States Chamber of Commerce; Mrs. Harper Sibley, civic leader; Vice-Mayor Joseph Silverstein; Alexander T. Simpson, president, Rochester Clearing House; James Slocum; County Manager Clarence Smith; Frank J. Smith, civic leader; Leroy E. Snyder, *Democrat and Chronicle*; James M. Spinning, superintendent of schools; William H. Stackel; Mayor Charles Stanton; Edwin Allen Stebbins; Henry H. Stebbins, chairman, board of directors, Tax League; Simon Stein; Kenneth Stewart, young men's council, Chamber of Commerce; Judge Arthur E. Sutherland, chairman, County Charter Commission; Vilas M. Swan, head, Social Agencies; Mrs. Harriet C. Thompson, vice-chairman, Democratic County Committee; John D. Tighe, president, Real Estate Board; Walter Todd; Douglas Townson; Alan Valentine, president, University of Rochester.

Harry Wareham, manager, Community Chest; Mrs. Stafford L. Warren, member state board, League of Women Voters; Mrs. William Washburn, president, Women's Union; James S. Watson, chairman, board of directors, Bureau of Municipal Research; Robert C. Watson; Mrs. Charles W. Weis, Jr., vice-chairman, Republic County Committee; Mrs. Frank M. Weston, president, Rochester Church Women; Herbert J. Winn; E. Clinton Wolcott, president, Citizens Tax League; Roland B. Woodward, executive vice-president, Chamber of Commerce; Rev. Whitney S. K. Yeaple, president, Rochester Federation of Churches.

HOWARD P. JONES, *Secretary*

Whither Adult Political Education?

Educating the people to a critical understanding of political issues is the great need of the time—a problem for which we must find a solution

THOMAS H. REED *Director, Consultant Service, National Municipal League*

"DEMOCRACY is at the crossroads." At least that's what the red-faced man with the thick neck said. It was in the smoking room of a pullman, vacation bound in midsummer. He didn't exactly say it either. He bellowed it with the evident intention of making it the beginning of some hot campaign propaganda most unsuitable to the occasion. So I foiled him.

"You're wrong," I said. "It's worse than that. What's a crossroads but a place where two smooth ribbons of concrete meet and where either road is a good road? Democracy, really, is on a spot—a quivering island scarcely above the level of a surrounding swamp, and sinking fast. It is so shrouded in fog that the most keen-sighted can't see six inches in front of his nose. The only way out is to build a causeway out of mud, in the dark, to the firm ground which may exist but nobody has yet seen except in dreams."

The red-faced man looked round for help and seeing none swallowed twice and changed the subject to the relative pitching prowess of Carl Hubbell and Christy Mathewson.

But the trip was spoiled, after all, because I got to thinking. For I am a profoundly convinced believer in democracy and hate the idea of dictatorship. Yet, allowing for some pardonable hyperbole, it seemed to me that my description of its present predicament had not been far from accurate. Hence I fell into a mood of gloom and perplexity from which only hard work or strenuous recreation have since been able to rescue me. There is enough in the existing situation to cause all sincere friends of democracy to take to drink, unless they can think of something to do about it.

The most frequent suggestion is to try education. That democracy requires trained and qualified leadership is a truism. My red-faced friend could get that far. It needs, however, trained followership just as badly. A dictatorship requires of its subjects only strict obedience. A successful democracy requires a combination of obedience with a critical faculty capable of telling good leadership from bad. It is hard to get. It is almost infinitely difficult to make a people at once obedient and critical. It calls for the highest degree of moral and intellectual discipline—just that balance which education is supposed to bring to pass, and admittedly in some individuals does.

Unfortunately, judged by its results in the production of trained followership, formal education has fallen far short of success. We do submit pretty gracefully to the verdict of the polls—perhaps in part because the issues of our ordinary party struggles do not cut very deep—but as for discriminating between false and true leadership, we may

be sometimes lucky, but we are all too often the dupes of our own indifference or the arts of the "practised hustings liar." The defects in what our educators call "civics" training as offered by our public school system have been too frequently exposed to call for painful repetition here. The flocks of text books, syllabi, and the like have been numerous enough to darken the intellectual horizon. But the fact remains that there are few good civics courses even on paper, and even fewer good civics teachers. For one school that so much as goes through the motions of adequate civics training, there are ten that teach civics perfunctorily, utilizing the part-time services of teachers primarily trained to teach any other subject from algebra to zoology.

UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTION

Nor has the situation been remedied by the rapidly increasing volume and quality of political science instruction in our colleges and universities. I would be the last to belittle the advance which has been made in this direction in the last generation. One only has to open the catalogues of our leading universities to realize that everything teachable—and some that is not—about the science of government is offered to their students. But university instruction does not penetrate to the masses. At its perfect best it can only train a few leaders, and how imperfectly it has done that is a cause of lamentation to Dean Gauss and others. We know today much more about the processes and methods of government than our fathers did, and we have developed a vast apparatus for manufacturing more knowledge through research. But its application to the actual business of government is still occasional.

The most hopeful aspect of education in relation to government in recent years is the rapid development of courses in the various branches of public administration and in the training of men and women for posts in the administrative service of government on the local, state, and national levels. Trained public servants mean better government service, and it is by the quality of its service that government is ultimately to be judged. The increasing activities of government—based as it is on popular demand for them—constantly increase the importance of the administrative as contrasted with the legislative side of government. Indeed, "the government" in relation to the lives of most of us most of the time is not the president and congress or the mayor and council, but some bureau chief or sub-bureau chief, director or commissioner who passes on our complaints or issues us our orders, but who otherwise remains an obscure figure unknown to the front pages of the daily papers. Since we needs must have a bureaucracy, the quality of our bureaucrats is a matter of great importance.

The fact remains, however, that we can train administrators until the cows come home without in the least affecting the basic problem of the democratic control of government. Glitteringly successful bureaucracies can exist under any form of government. They certainly are more common under autocratic or oligarchic institutions than in democracies. They flourish even better under Hitler and Mussolini than in the supposedly free air of America. The career men are necessary but they cannot do much to tip the scale against dictatorship. That is because the very business of being a career man involves indifference to the issues of politics. If a member of the professional administrative staff takes sides with one group of his potential superiors as against another, he soon learns that those who "live by the sword perish by the sword."

His permanent influence depends upon his impartiality, his readiness to serve Demos or Caesar with equal zeal.

THE EXPERT AND POWER

We have had some recent examples of this truth among our so-called "brain-trusters" who have failed to observe President Harold Dodd's principle that the expert should be "on tap and not on top." One cannot outshadow one's political superiors in the news and hope to retain one's lofty role as an expert. In fact, unless this itch for publicity and the urge for power are restrained, the expert soon has no role at all. It would be easy, were it not cruel, to list the names of many sound scholars well qualified to pluck a prophet's robe and whisper wisdom in his ear who are without power or influence today because they insisted on shouting major prophecies on their own hooks. And incidentally it must be said that their lack of "passion for anonymity" has done an injury to the proper influence of academic men in government which only time and discretion can repair.

At any rate, the permanent official, no matter what his merits, cannot be a leader of public opinion and retain his permanency—and generally speaking our best college-trained civil servants prefer a regular salary at a steady job to precarious eminence in politics. We are as far away as we were before we began our academic tub-thumping for public administration from the solution of the problem of the democratic control of the modern state. Our system of formal education has failed to train either leaders or followers in sufficient numbers or quality to make democracy function properly.

Formal education having failed, how about adult education? The adult education family is a large one. Miss Musical Education and her twin, Miss Literary Education, are among the most popular of the young fry with philanthropists and foundations as well as with the amateurs of the cult. Even Mr. Scientific Education has his devoted foster-parents. But that unhappy hermaphrodite Political Education is a stepchild whom nobody wants to have found on his doorstep. There is contamination in his very presence. Could it be reduced to education in the mere formal facts about our governmental system, the child, anemic though he might be, could be acknowledged in good society. But that is impossible. Adult political education must deal with the policies as well as the framework of government or there will be nobody to listen to its teachings. It is much less important for the citizen to know how a congressman is elected than what he ought to vote for when elected. Indeed, such formal facts as the number of representatives and senators, whether the state comptroller is elected or appointed, and whether or not the mayor has a veto power are the sort of things which our system of formal education is relatively less unsuccessful in conveying to its—let us not say victims—subjects. The adult public refuses, however, to be greatly interested in the structure of government, and adult education in all its branches depends for its vitality on public interest. One only has to consider the violent but futile efforts of those earnest gentlemen who in the last presidential campaign tried to interest the American people in the effect of the New Deal on the constitution of the United States, to realize how difficult it is to arouse interest in questions of the form of government, no matter how fundamental. Only the intelligentsia are much moved by questions so abstract as whether the president is getting too much power or not. What the public wants to know is whether he is using

the power he has in the way they want him to.

A DELICATE SUBJECT

The result is that any vital program of adult political education is redolent of controversy. The president of a state university, or of a private one if any large part of its income is at the mercy of living donors, can smell it coming clear through the big oak door of his office. If he does not order it taken outside and buried at once, he has it fumigated until no one can recognize the result as either politics or education. This is only the application of the law of self-preservation and, since it could hardly be otherwise, should not lead us to hate college presidents. But it must be recognized.

There is another difficulty in the way of universities taking much part in adult political education—the prejudice of the more conservative academicians against courses for adults outside the regular curriculum. This is based on the fact that a university extension course for adults—even for college graduates—usually achieves a standard of scholarship on which regular freshmen would be flunked out of college. Gray-bearded heads of departments are loath to see their young instructors corrupted by association with such standards. For the older men who do much extension lecturing the gray-beards have a derogatory word, "popularizers," and one might as well be a cad or a blackguard as that. In other words, "extension" as a term applied to all extra or intramural instruction, personal or by correspondence, not part of the formal provision made for regular students, is a misfit in the average university, at least in the opinion of those who control promotions.

That's not saying they are right—at least altogether. More than thirty-five years ago now, a young assistant professor at the University of California made twelve trips to the old mining town of Sonora far up in the foothills of the Sierras to deliver a course of lectures on it matters not what. It was a long journey with two changes of cars and more than a little heat and alkali dust. On the platform at Sonora he was always greeted by the portly superior judge who was chairman of the local lecture committee. "Professor," he would say, "You have had a long hard trip and you must be thirsty," and in some old bar thick with the ghosts of the gold miners of forty-nine and with the occasional actual presence of some picturesque relics of those aureous days, that thirst was quenched. Then, bathed and brushed, the professor was the judge's guest at dinner, sometimes in his home above the town but more often in the back room of a saloon whose unpainted walls belied the treasures of food and drink it offered. And after an interlude for the lecture, the least part of the business, long hours of talk. And how the judge could talk of the mining country and its history, of famous cases in which millions were involved, of strange characters who followed the gold rush, of education, philosophy, politics, art, religion, books. He probably promoted those lectures so as to get someone to talk to. His judicial business did not occupy more than a few days a month, and he used the time to read—everything. He was particularly fond of Macaulay and Gibbon and could recite from memory page after page of the *History of England* and the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Even if the attendants at the lecture learned nothing, and that is more than likely, the young professor learned a lot about some things which he could never have found in the college library.

Be that as it may, the universities will probably never do much more than

wave a hand at adult political education. They may talk a lot about the alumni university, which means lecturing to the old grads at commencement time. But though the professor of Assyriology may bear down on the pros and cons of the authenticity of the latest discovered inscriptions, the professor of government is going to have to soft pedal his criticism of the state administration. Who after all are so sensitive as alumni?

SUMMER INSTITUTES

There is only one method of adult political education which our universities seem to use freely and successfully, and that is the summer institute. Beginning with the Institute of Politics which drew to Williamstown for several years a brilliant group of people interested in international affairs, they have spread through the nation so that scores of rostra resound, simultaneously or almost so, with the shouts of the champions of this and that in the field of politics. At the University of Virginia, for example, there gather each year invited and uninvited illuminati to the number of several score who run round tables and address meetings at which the bulk of the listening is done by a very miscellaneous assortment of people, mostly from Virginia, but always some from the far corners, brought there by the combined attractions of Jefferson's classic colonnades, the renown of Albemarle County hospitality, and the desire to assist, in slightly more than the French sense, at discussions between famous men and women. It is effective adult education, and it is possible for a university because opportunity can be given for the expression of many points of view. It is a sort of intellectual free-for-all and may the best man win. It is useless for propaganda because any propaganda is answered on the spot. For example, the Liberty League put on at the University of Virginia, at its own expense, a round table on "The Constitution and the New Deal" in the summer of 1935. Administration supporters were at a minimum in the printed announcement of the round table, but sufficiently adequate ones just turned up by chance in the audience, so that both Liberty Leaguers and New Dealers went home thinking they'd won the battle and very well satisfied with the university.

Summer institutes, however, in the aggregate only reach a few thousand people. The press and the radio are the only mediums which reach the people en masse. The press it must be admitted has been our chief means of adult political education. Quantitatively there is no fault to be found with the material for adult political education provided by the daily news. Nor can anyone cavil at the inclusiveness of the audience our newspapers command. But the manner and circumstances of its presentation destroy in large measure the educational value of our news and editorial columns. The news is so often colored, editorial comment is so often inspired by ulterior motives or by sheer whim, that except on the assumption of an educated citizenry trained to glean the truth from the vast and motley volume of wordage poured forth on it, the press is probably a menace to democracy. The very quantity of the news offered for our daily diet is conducive to intellectual indigestion. The richness of the table tempts to indiscriminate indulgence and ends in confusing instead of enlightening all but the clearest minds. It is possible to imagine a press which would perform admirably the function of moulding public opinion—some notable examples of able, independent, and honest newspapers indicate how admirably. But

as things stand today the press is a problem, not the solution of one.

POLITICS AND THE RADIO

Almost the same judgment must be passed on the radio as at present conducted. If anyone could have had the endurance to listen attentively to all the political oratory poured into the ether in the recent presidential campaign, he would scarcely have been helped to a decision on the merits of the contest. The politicians did their best to talk us deaf, dumb, and blind. The only escape was a sense of what not to listen to. By far the greater part of the time devoted to civic problems by the radio is employed in giving voice to the pronouncements of the politicians. This applies not only to campaign time but in a slightly less degree to the intervals between campaigns as well. The radio chains will not, it is true, sell time for political discussion except during the presidential campaign, and local stations usually follow the same practice with regard to local issues. But the chains and individual stations give time very freely to any of the politically great who wish to talk at any time. It is, of course, a measure of self-protection. In those who might have the power and opportunity to impose limitations on the use of the air is produced a feeling that the air, since it is open to them, is very well employed. It is done without much sacrifice because the politicians wish to make occasional addresses which can be fitted in at odd spots without deranging the time sold to advertisers.

Listening, however, to the conflicting views of politicians, while it may have some slight incidental educational effect, is really advancing us no further toward the solution of the problem of developing the critical faculty of the Demos so that it may tell good leadership from bad. Without adequate means of telling who is lying and how much, the facility which the radio offers of hearing all the politicians has made our last state perhaps worse than our first.

As for adult political education in the real sense of the word, the radio does little and promises to do less. The air is to a certain extent open to responsible individuals and groups for short series and spot talks, but a large part of the available evening time—the only time worthwhile—is occupied by Senator Blank or Governor Asterisk, and another considerable portion is taken up by pressure groups for their own particular promotions. For systematic adult political education, pure and simple, untainted with propaganda, there is mighty little room. With the increasing demand for time by commercial advertisers, the broadcasting companies have grown steadily more reluctant to commit themselves to any long-time promises for education. And assurance of being on the air for a considerable period is necessary for the planning and execution of any systematic attempt at adult political education. Even when the great national networks assign time to an educational program, there is no real assurance that the individual stations will not find it convenient to supplant it with a local commercial one. Four years of experience in the production of the "You and Your Government" series has led the Committee on Civic Education by Radio in a report on *Four Years of Network Broadcasting*, recently published by the University of Chicago Press, to conclude that it is impracticable at present to attempt systematic civic education over the national chains. Even the splendid gesture made by the National Broadcasting Company in its "Town Hall of the Air" program cannot refute this conclusion. The very nature of the Town Hall program, depending as it does on famous

speakers and topics of current interest to get and hold the attention of a nation-wide audience, puts it wholly out of the field of systematic civic training.

COMMERCIALISM VS EDUCATION

It is a regrettable but not surprising fact that the great chains and individual stations are dominated by a commercial spirit. Their managers are possessed by the laudable desire to make money for their stockholders. In consequence they are so organized as to do for education only as much as they cannot avoid doing without provoking the condemnation of public opinion and the possible action of the Federal Communications Commission. They have "educational departments," it is true, but their duty seems to be to see not how much but how little time can be devoted to education. Just as a harried mother stuffs a pacifier into a baby's mouth, so a certain number of educational programs are offered us. If we chew hard enough on them, so the broadcasters reason, we may never realize what suckers we really are. And of all aspects of education, political education is that of which broadcasters are most wary.

Nowhere is the orphaned state of adult political education more apparent than in the offices of the foundations—miraculous manifestations of the "dead hand," treasure chests devoted to philanthropy. They all have a formula for the applicant for funds for political education: "We are deeply sympathetic with the great work you are doing, but we cannot give any money for an activity which has anything to do with the issues of current politics." It's not to be wondered at nor altogether to be deplored. Political education carried on with money derived from J. P. Morgan or John D. Rockefeller might not only embarrass the donor, but it might very seriously prejudice the work. It would at once be open to the charge, however unjust, that it was an attempt to fasten on the country the ideas of the financial tycoon whose money was being spent. It is not surprising that these foundations prefer to spend their money in research, especially research in scientific fields. The nearest approach they make to political education as such is to support training for the public service. They can give money for the college training of future administrators and for the in-service training of men already in government employ. A whole galaxy of very useful organizations of public officials, well supported by foundation money, revolves around the Public Administration Clearing House in Chicago. We have already seen, however, that mere perfection of administrative technique will not enable us to operate popular government. The preservation of democracy calls for a trained political leadership which cannot be found in the permanent civil service, and for trained followership on the part of many millions whose chief preoccupation is earning a living somewhere else than on a government payroll.

All this is a dark picture. The stepchild, adult political education, has no place to lay his head. Universities and foundations are afraid of him. The press and the radio don't know him. But that does not mean that the case is hopeless. There are precedents, and good ones, for the triumph of causes rejected by wealth and power. Political education must become the creed of the masses. There are enlightened men and women who know they need it and who hate dictators; there are enough of them to save democracy. An impressive job of adult political education today is being done by the League of Women Voters—groups of women, humble women for the most part, in hundreds of communities throughout the country bound

together in state and national organizations and actually educating themselves. Another fine bit of work is being done by the National Municipal League which since 1894 has been bearing down on the principles of good local government. Then there is the Civil Service Reform League and a host of other organizations local and national which keep the lamp of adult political education alight. They get good-sized checks from sympathetic individuals occasionally—some of them have their unobtrusive "angels"—but on the whole they are built on a broad foundation of the interest of individuals who expect to fry no fish through connection with them. May their tribe increase!

EXPERIMENT IN FORUMS

"Valiant," too, is the word for our United States Commissioner of Education, John W. Studebaker, whose experimental "fora" are stressing adult political education under the joint auspices of federal and local government. Forum leaders are fearlessly promoting the discussion of political problems. Theirs is a ticklish task—to bring to pass debate which will produce light as well as heat and show no bias. They must be diplomats of the platform with the combined qualifications of an ambassador and a prize-fight referee. Our prayers are with them.

But when democracy has been safely got to dry land and the crowns are distributed among those who are responsible, there will be special ones for the good teachers. Just because a university is timid and time-serving, it does not follow that a sincere and honest professor cannot leave an indelible impression on hundreds or thousands of young people. He can make them devoted as he is to straight thinking. He does not need to wear a chip on his shoulder and seek martyrdom by the violence of his denunciations. He need not be a Savonarola. All he needs to be is a true scholar and a lover of his kind. There are some such in the colleges and universities of our land and they reproduce themselves mightily. There is room for many more. The supply of crowns won't give out. Just because a city school system must be kept out of politics is no reason why a conscientious, clear-headed teacher of civics cannot arouse her classes to real enthusiasm for the study of their government and its problems. She does not need to refuse to take the teachers' oath, bad as is the taste which requires it, nor court dismissal by insulting the mayor or the president of the school board. With never a lapse from the impartiality which is the inevitable consequence of her intellectual honesty, she can make her pupils realize the utter reality of the problem of government. There are teachers like that. There would be more if there were more college teachers of like kidney.

There can be no doubt of the need of political education in school and out. There can be no doubt of present failure. Schools, colleges, foundations, press, radio have not met the challenge. The job of educating the people to a critical understanding of political issues and to an appreciation of the virtues and vices of their would-be leaders is left to a few impecunious enthusiasts ineffectively organized. Yet, if the job is not done, a heavy price will be paid by all of us. The problem of political education is a problem for every individual. Somehow or other we must find a solution.

Personnel Progress in the Deep South

Jefferson County and the cities of Birmingham and Bessemer, Alabama, move forward under the merit system

ROSCOE C. MARTIN

University of Alabama

In the summer of 1935 the legislature of Alabama passed and the governor approved an act "to create and establish in each county of the state of Alabama which has a population of 200,000 or more people, . . . a county-wide civil service system."

On a number of counts this act and the system for which it provides are of current interest: first, there are very few units of government in the south which operate under the merit system; second, the act provides for a set-up which has a number of interesting and in some cases unique features; third, the personnel board which the measure creates has approached its task in a workmanlike manner and established a merit system which is such in fact as well as in name; fourth, present indications are that the system will survive notwithstanding considerable opposition.

The civil service act was sponsored in the legislature by the Jefferson County (Birmingham) delegation. Though phrased in general terms, the act was designed and meant specifically for Jefferson County. In all likelihood it will be many years before another county attains a population which will bring it under the terms of the law.

No sooner had the measure been signed by the governor than it was subjected to bitter attack. A writ of injunction was requested and quo warranto proceedings were launched by foes of the merit system, while an action in mandamus was initiated by its friends. The long and short of this period of litigation was that on April 4, 1936, the supreme court of Alabama declared the act constitutional, thus clearing the way for the more effective functioning of the personnel machinery which during the interim had been set up on a makeshift basis.

The act is a very complete and detailed document, reaching the length of approximately ten thousand words. It covers all of the subjects usually dealt with in such a measure, though it contains certain unique features which set it apart. Chief among these features, perhaps, is the citizens supervisory commission, which is the keystone of the machinery provided. In an effort to remove personnel administration completely from politics, an ex officio supervisory commission was established. Though the act does not say so in so many words, the commission has seventeen members. These are the county judge of probate (as chairman); the judge of the United States court located in Jefferson County; the presidents of the Birmingham and the Bessemer Chambers of Commerce; the president of the Birmingham Junior Chamber of Commerce; the presidents of Birmingham Southern and Howard Colleges; the president of the Birmingham Medical Association; the presidents of the

Birmingham, Bessemer, and Tarrant City Trades Councils; a representative of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, Locomotive Engineers, and Railway Trainmen; the presidents of the Birmingham and Bessemer Parent-Teachers Associations; and the commanders of the United Confederate Veterans, Spanish American War Veterans, and the American Legion.

The duties of the citizens supervisory commission are: first, to select the members of the personnel board (described below); second, to meet annually, receive the annual report of the personnel board, and make such recommendations to the board as it shall deem proper; third, to fill vacancies in the board; and fourth, to insure that the expenditures of the personnel office do not go beyond what seems a reasonable figure.

The personnel board contains three members who serve for six-year overlapping terms. The members serve without compensation except for an allowance of ten dollars per meeting, and this may not total more than forty dollars per month. The duties of the board, briefly, are: first, to appoint a personnel director, and second, to take final action on a great variety of personnel questions, usually on the recommendation of the director.

The director of personnel, who is selected by and serves at the pleasure of the personnel board, is an administrator in a real sense of the word. He serves as the board's executive officer and, in brief, has those duties normally falling to a personnel officer, though in virtually every instance his decisions take the form of recommendations which must be approved by the board.

The personnel department has jurisdiction over all county employees and over the employees of all cities in the county of more than 12,500 population, with certain exceptions. Cities of less than 12,500 may adopt the merit system by resolution of the governing body. Thus far none of the minor cities has seen fit to come under the jurisdiction of the board.

In effect, therefore, the civil service act provides for a merit system for Jefferson County and for the cities of Bessemer and Birmingham, with administration vested in the citizens supervisory commission, the personnel board, and the director of personnel.

WORK OF THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

The first task of the personnel department was, of course, to conduct examinations and establish eligible lists in accordance with the terms of the law. The act divided employees already in the service into three categories: those with more than two years of service were blanketed in without qualification, those who had served between one and two years were placed on a probationary basis, and those of less than one year's tenure were given non-competitive (qualifying) examinations. The task of giving the prescribed non-competitive examinations has been completed.

On May 1, 1937, twenty-nine open competitive examinations had been held. Of the 942 applicants examined, 516 (about 55 per cent) had been placed on the eligible lists. Of those who had passed the competitive examinations, 28.3 per cent had received appointments.

The second major task confronting the personnel department was that of classification. The director attacked this problem and that of salary standardization simultaneously. By June 1st classification and standardization systems had been worked out for all county employees. Work recently was begun on classification in Birmingham.

An important aspect of the personnel department is that which pertains to re-

search, with which it is charged by the civil service act. To date the director of personnel has caused to be made several surveys relating to such subjects as county purchasing, overlapping duties as among departments, and the organization and operation of the county charity hospital. In each instance the board has made recommendations based on the director's findings. Many of these have been approved, a few have been rejected, and some are now under consideration by the appropriate governing body.

Among the general functions of the personnel board is that of serving as a disciplinary body. Other routine duties involve maintaining the official roster of employees, keeping efficiency records, and recording such data as relate to leaves and absences, lay-offs, reinstatements, transfers, promotions, demotions, suspensions, removals, etc.

POINTS OF WEAKNESS AND OF STRENGTH

In some respects the civil service act and the personnel system which it sets up are subject to criticism, in others they are deserving of commendation. Chief among the defects to be noted is the fact that the governmental units affected by the act have the same organization now as always. Specifically, this means that in the county most of the important department heads are chosen by popular vote. This in turn means that some department heads are vigorously opposed to the merit system, some are friendly Indians, and some favor the system. The second major fault is to be found in the detailed and technical character of the act itself and the lack of clarity in some of its provisions. A third defect arises from the fact that the rules and regulations adopted by the personnel board in many cases repeat the statute, in some instances verbatim. Fourth, while there is one system of personnel machinery for Jefferson County, Bessemer, and Birmingham, the board in reality administers three personnel systems. There can be no transfer of employees from unit to unit. Further, Jefferson County is blessed with two courthouses and for practical purposes (in many respects) two county governments; and in general there can be no transfer of employees from the Bessemer courthouse to the Birmingham courthouse, or the other way around. Fifth, a department head may not remove an appointive employee: he may merely prefer charges which the personnel board hears and passes upon finally. Sixth, the act contains a provision that applicants must reside within the jurisdiction they desire to serve. Further, an applicant must reside in the Birmingham section of the county if he wishes to serve in the Birmingham courthouse and in the Bessemer section if he wishes to serve in the Bessemer courthouse. Seventh, while the act goes into considerable detail concerning the political activity of employees, actually it does not cover that subject satisfactorily. Eighth, cities of less than 12,500 population may come under the jurisdiction of the personnel board by resolution, and so far as the act goes they might come under one month and remove themselves by like resolution the next. Ninth, the system of partial blanketing-in and partial examination of old employees is looked upon with disfavor in most quarters.

On the other hand, several very excellent features may be observed. First, the method employed for naming the personnel board and in turn the director has had the effect of removing the department completely from politics. Second, the personnel board from the beginning has understood its functions and duties and has not interfered with the routine operation of the personnel office.

Third, the act vests considerable authority in the director, who has served as a real manager of personnel without the unnecessary and undesirable restrictions which so frequently hamper such an officer. Fourth, the provisions of the measure which relate to temporary appointments in general are good, though because of the pressure of work it has not been possible in every instance to abide by the letter of the law. Fifth, the promotional system set up by the statute is a good one. Sixth, and perhaps most important, the supervisory commission, the personnel board, and the director have worked individually and collectively to make a go of the merit system in Jefferson County. It is not difficult to visualize a situation in which the civil service act would have been much less satisfactory in operation than it has been.

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Among the features which characterize the Jefferson County law and the system set up under it may be observed the citizens supervisory commission. Various authorities have devised systems to remove personnel administration from political control. The system at hand constitutes an interesting effort in that direction which, in so far as a reasonably careful study reveals, has been successful in the attainment of its purpose. A second noteworthy feature is found in the fact that one personnel agency administers the merit system for three separate governmental units. Here is an intergovernmental agency—it might even be called a metropolitan agency—dealing with a problem common to several jurisdictions. A third unique arrangement is found in the three-class system, previously described, of dealing with employees already in the service. Fourth, there is the provision that when a vacancy occurs the director has the power to recommend to the personnel board that it be not filled. It is quite proper that he be given this function, though it is doubtful whether the board should have the authority on his recommendation to pass finally on the question of the adequacy of personnel in a given office. Fifth, it is a most interesting fact that no governmental body has control of the personnel department. The act provides that the supervisory commission through the personnel board shall control both the organization and the budget of the department; but the commission is an ex officio body made up for the greater part of private citizens and is in no wise related to any of the governmental units involved.

The act specifies that the expenses of the personnel office shall be prorated among Jefferson County, Bessemer, and Birmingham on the basis of number of employees. At the end of its first year of operation, the department rendered a bill to Jefferson County equal to .46 per cent of its net operating costs and to Birmingham equal to .33 per cent of its net operating costs (excluding schools, and library and health departments) for the last fiscal year. Many charges have been leveled against the personnel board but extravagance has not been one of them.

PROSPECTS

Handed down as it was by the state legislature, it would be generous to say that the act was received without particular enthusiasm by the local employees. In truth, it probably would be safe to go further and say that there was not a vast amount of enthusiasm for the merit system among the voters of the county. The lack of enthusiasm if not the downright suspicion with which the measure was received, together with the litigation previously mentioned, got the personnel board off to

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Housing and Resettlement in Vienna

The city on the Danube one of the first to assume responsibility for the housing of its lower income groups

ERNST KARL WINTER *Former Vice-Mayor, Vienna, Austria*

In the fifteen years of its regime the former Socialist municipal administration of Vienna had built up an exemplary housing policy on a large scale which had found appreciation and imitation in the rest of the world. The new municipal administration, nominated by the authoritarian government, however, has stopped the municipal housing program of its predecessor and has turned its interest to the problem of resettlement. The following exposition will attempt to clarify from a sociological point of view the economic presuppositions of the Socialist housing policy as well as of the resettlement policy of the new government. It will try to demonstrate how, despite their different ideological foundations, both are linked in the same feeling of political responsibility. The author believes himself to be competent to supply such an objective analysis, which presupposes a standpoint transcending political parties, because he, himself, although during the last four years a public functionary of the new regime, had always been an advocate of the Socialist housing policy. On the other hand, after the catastrophe of the Socialist Democratic party in 1934 he was in a position to demonstrate to the working class the importance of resettlement problems for the labor movement.

For the understanding of Vienna's housing policy as it was practiced by the Socialist municipal administration from 1918 to 1934, it is necessary to point out that it was an interesting *socialistic* experiment within a *capitalistic* world. Therein rested its value and its limitations too.

The first question that arises from the traditional European point of view is whether the public power in federal-state, local-state, or municipality (like the gradation of political organization in Austria) should bear the responsibility of the housing of the people, especially those of the lower income groups. The extent of influence of public power in the community is a historical, not a theoretical, question. It varies from one country to another. In one country public utilities such as transportation, and electric, gas, and water works are, as a matter of course, under public administration, while in another country all this is, as a matter of course, in the hands of private capital. Thus, the development of public administration may be different because of its dependence upon historical circumstances. Theoretically, however, and from a social point of view, the public responsibility for such matters exists wherever private capital, according to its immanent tendency, cannot satisfy the necessities of life. If this responsibility is accepted, then the various measures for its realization are of relative value.

The historical starting point in the legal sphere for the Socialist housing policy of Vienna was the so-called *Mieterschutz*, or protection of tenants

by law, which the imperial Austrian government decreed during the World War to protect the poor against increases in rent and dissolution of leases by the proprietors of houses. This protection of tenants prevented the owners of property from giving notice to their tenants and from raising their rents. It was a kind of socialistic measure of the imperial government as were many other measures of the so-called war-socialism which was established in many countries during the World War.

LEGAL PROTECTION OF TENANTS

It was on this law for protection of tenants that the Socialist municipal administration of Vienna built up its housing policy. The Socialist Labor party in Austria always defended the protection of tenants, often with undemocratic measures such as parliamentary obstruction or filibustering. Even the authoritarian regime of today could not yet break down this protection of tenants, because it is too deeply rooted in the sentiments of the population of Vienna. It has also long since become an integral part of Austrian economy, which is accustomed to it. The determination of wages and rents in Austria had long been adjusted to this legal situation. This is the reason the measure for the protection of tenants in Austria, decreed by imperial law in the World War and defended for fifteen years by the Socialist Labor party, continues with little change in the present authoritarian era and probably will continue for a long time.

This obstinacy of a legal regulation, however, needs further explanations. Housing conditions in Vienna before the World War were abominable. The average dwellings were very small, one room and kitchen often without air and light, with windows opening into a narrow inner court, without toilet and inside plumbing—altogether unhealthy and depressing for the life of the poor people living in such quarters. Moreover, the proprietors of these houses were possessed of extraordinary power. The landlord or *Hausherr* was an important personage in pre-war Viennese social and political life. Consisting mostly of small people like bakers, butchers, tailors, and shoemakers, the landlords had what amounted almost to a right upon the life and death of their tenants. The landlord alone decided whether the tenant might remain or must leave the dwelling; he often even exercised a control over the number of children in a family, since families with many children could not easily find a dwelling. The landlords had likewise important political power. The Christian Socialist party, led by Dr. Karl Lueger, mayor of Vienna, found the mainstay of its support in this potent class of proprietors, and according to the election law of that time, this group elected most of the representatives in the city council of Vienna. All these circumstances explain the deeply rooted resentment of the working class in Vienna against these proprietors who personified for them the hated capitalistic system and who entered so intimately into their daily lives.

MUNICIPALIZING IN VIENNA

This political importance of the housing problem in Vienna can be understood only if one considers the extension of municipal administration before the Socialists came into power. Already in the 1890's Dr. Lueger, the leader of the Christian Socialist party, had municipalized such public utilities in Vienna as street cars, and electric, gas, and water works. Vienna thus became the first city in Europe to undertake municipalization on a large scale. In the light of this situation, therefore, the demand for municipal construction of dwellings for lower income groups was not very extraordinary.

Thus, the urban housing movement in Vienna began not with private initiative, but with the municipality. The Vienna

municipal administration very early recognized the importance of the low-cost housing problem and the vital need for a public housing program. Moreover, municipal control of housing was an old political demand of the Austrian Labor party. Soon after the World War, therefore, the city council drafted a comprehensive long-term program for the housing of lower income groups. Implicit in this measure was the political idea that the public administration in federal-state, local-state, and municipality is responsible for the housing of the lower income groups. The Vienna municipal administration, supported by the Socialist Labor party, was able to inaugurate a housing policy, which, in a short time, became the model for other municipalities as well as for states. For fifteen years the city of Vienna worked to improve housing conditions for the working class. The political development in Austria in the years 1933-1934, however, broke the power of the Socialist Labor party and thus deprived the Austrian working-class of this administrative activity. The new municipal administration of Vienna, nominated by the authoritarian government, stopped almost entirely the construction of dwellings. This was due to the situation resulting from the financial policy of the federal government against "red" Vienna. The large apartment buildings, built by the Socialist municipal administration during its fifteen years of power, remain, however, as the permanent monument of the Labor Party administration both in the appearance of the city as well as in the hearts of the people—an impressive sight for every visitor to the old city on the Danube.

The Socialist municipal administration first developed a program for the construction of ten thousand dwellings. This was later increased to twenty thousand, then forty, and finally seventy thousand. A total of seventy-five thousand dwellings was built during the fifteen years. If we add to these the number of dwellings and settlements built by the new municipal administration and the dwellings in old houses owned by the municipality, there are nearly eighty thousand dwellings operated by Vienna—a city with two million inhabitants and approximately half a million independent households.

HOUSING POLICY

There was no slum clearance in Vienna because the municipality built only new buildings on new sites. The city had always been an important landowner and it also made new land purchases. The housing policy of Vienna was thus connected with the land policy. The land owned by the municipality was, of course, limited and this was the reason big apartment buildings were built rather than family houses, as the political antagonists of the Socialist housing policy were demanding. The costs of building a satellite city, for example in the northeast of Vienna, with the necessity of opening up large areas, acquiring land, installing new transportation facilities, and providing water, sewage, electricity, and gas, would have been too high. On the other hand it must be said that the socialist administrators in Vienna had little understanding of the problem of one-family houses, not to speak of resettlement or the homestead movement.

TAXATION

The first principle of the municipal construction program was to finance building operations not by loans but by taxes. Private capital could not find enough profits in the building of dwellings for the lower income groups. This phenomenon, which was quite general in the post-war period, was strengthened in Austria by the above-mentioned legal protection of tenants. The municipal administration, therefore, found that it had to build and that it was better for

it to build by taxes than by loans since loans burden succeeding generations much more than taxes burden the present. This method was without doubt really socialistic within a world which is still capitalistic.

A special tax was levied in Vienna for the building of lower-income dwellings. This was the so-called *Wohnbausteuer,* which was required of everyone who had a dwelling within the city. The city of Vienna, being a state in the Austrian federal state as well as a city, has the right of taxation like other states. Later the municipality also used other taxes for building. The new municipal administration, on the contrary, still collects the old tax for building, but uses it to cover the higher welfare budget.

The dwellings could be very cheap because the municipality was building by taxes and not by loans. In the rents there need not be a quota for amortization of borrowed capital. The municipality also did not seek to make any profit from its dwellings. The rents served only to meet the current carrying charges of the houses. The same principle guided the municipal administration of public utilities such as street cars, electricity, gas and water. All these facilities therefore could be provided very cheaply.

The reactionary forces were concentrated against this socialistic experiment. The Socialist housing policy resulted manifestly on the one hand in the depreciation of private capital invested in real estate and houses, and on the other hand, in the concentration of the building of dwellings for lower income groups entirely in the power of the city. The whole building industry was controlled by the municipal administration and had to submit to the conditions which the municipality imposed. In connection with the protection of tenants the Socialist housing policy brought about a sterilization of private housing capital and ultimately, therefore, influenced the municipalizing of housing in the city. Private capital, therefore, accused the municipality of destroying the basis of national credit, which was, according to this view, the only thing which could save the Austrian economy from ruin. To this the municipality answered that the city itself would be the best guarantee of national credit. The central planning of housing for lower income groups by the municipality, it claimed, had raised the standard of housing of the working class in Vienna and therefore also stimulated the energy of this class; this positive gain, therefore, counterbalanced the other possible loss.

In fact, the housing policy of the municipality and its achievements did stimulate greatly the self-consciousness of the Vienna working class. No other political problem in Austria so agitated political passions as did this question. This makes it impossible for the new municipal administration, nominated by the authoritarian regime, to modify the hitherto existing political line. The same municipal taxes still continue and there is likewise the old protection of tenants by law.

RESETTLEMENT PROBLEMS

The new municipal administration was at first forced by financial reasons to stop the building of dwellings for lower income groups. Only lately has the new municipal administration again begun to build dwellings in modest form. They constructed emergency dwellings for homeless families (*Familienasyle*) and houses for the middle class. This latter was done, according to the official explanation, in order to demonstrate to private capital that private building would be profitable. Whether this public example is attractive for private capital still remains an open question.

The new regime has applied itself with more energy to the resettlement policy. This had likewise been initiated

by the Socialist municipal administration at the beginning of the economic crisis. Resettlement in Vienna proceeds from the federal government, but is sponsored by the municipality. It gives to industrial workers who have lost their full employment in the factories additional agricultural work. This resettlement, therefore, is called *Nebenerwerbssiedlung,* which means supplementary settlements, because of the combination of industrial and agricultural labor income. Most settlements of this kind have been established on the other side of the Danube in the twenty-first district of Vienna. There the resettled industrial workers raise vegetables and fruits. Cultivation and sale of the products are organized by coöperatives, but without prejudice against private initiative. Only such fruits and vegetables are raised which are not cultivated by the Austrian peasants and by the gardeners of Vienna. This is to avoid competition. Resettlement in Austria is still in the experimental stage. The industrial workers who are willing to leave the city and to go to settlements in the environs of the city must be ready to live more primitively than before. Only the economic crisis has prepared the workingman for this hard resolution. Public authority can attempt only to make the conditions of resettlement as tolerable as possible, but it cannot arrange the same conveniences in these settlements as are found in urban dwellings. The financial means for making this possible are not available in Austria. Living conditions in the settlements, therefore, are very primitive with only a so-called *Kernhaus,* or skeleton house to live in. The agricultural equipment for the settlers is, of course, more important than the domestic facilities. Foreign visitors to these settlements around Vienna may see how poor Austria has become and how severe the methods must be for helping the poor people.

In evaluating the achievements of Vienna housing as well as resettlement it is necessary to bear in mind that the Austrian standard of living is much lower than the American. Many things which are accepted as conveniences in the United States in Austria are still a luxury and available only to a small selected group of people. In Austria, for example, central heating, electrical cooking, bathroom, elevator, incinerator, and refrigerator are still luxuries which even the middle class does not always enjoy. The advance in the standard of living, however, is demonstrated in the greater completeness of the dwellings, which have now their own toilets and water service, and in the greater spaciousness of the buildings, which have large courts and gardens and therefore more light and air for the dwellings. There are, moreover, social rooms and community halls. Last but not least there is the important factor of the self-consciousness of the working class in having built with its own power these better houses.

Likewise the importance of the resettlement policy lies not in the improvement of the dwellings, but in the possibility of a supplementary job for the industrial part-time workers; or even in the possibility of a job generally for those industrial workers who have fallen out of the industrial world and who in consequence of the shrinkage of the industrial potential in Austria can no longer hope to be re-established in their former industrial status. Resettlement therefore is a measure effected by the economic depression and its extension depends on whether we consider the industrial crisis in Austria as a permanent or transitory phenomenon. But even those who emphasize the transitory character of the crisis must concede the permanence of structural unemployment in industrial society with its technical specialization of labor. Consequently prosperity too brings a more or less small group of permanently unemployed which resettlement can absorb.

The planning of resettlement as in Austria will create a new type of productive life which is neither entirely industrial nor agricultural, but a combination of both. The highly skilled industrial worker, as the experience in Austria shows, is capable of qualitative agrarian work, such as cultivation of valuable fruits and vegetables which peasants and gardeners often cannot cultivate. The industrial workers are also better educated by their labor movement and the coöperatives for the necessary organization of coöperatives for production and distribution. Thus, a new type of individual arises who combines industrial and agricultural qualifications.

The economic life after the World War and after the present economic depression in Austria has added new functions to the federal government as well as to the municipal administration. Not only the administration itself in the old-fashioned sense must be fulfilled by the public authorities but the constructive planning of new life also. The political struggles in Europe with their contrast between democratic and fascist, socialist and nationalist tendencies have displaced the profound study of economic problems and relations. Within the anti-socialist circles, moreover, all constructive planning is suspect. Nevertheless, the trend of development in the near future in Europe must be towards greater constructive planning both in housing and resettlement—provided that Europe is still to be saved from political catastrophe.

PERSONNEL PROGRESS IN THE DEEP SOUTH

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a slow start, so that it was late in the spring of 1936 before the machinery was in effective operation.

In the fifteen months since the supreme court's decision, the merit system appears to have gained ground on every hand. The most significant test it has made came in the course of the recent Birmingham city primaries. While it would not be correct to say that civil service was an active issue in the city campaigns, it is true, nevertheless, that the merit system came in for considerable discussion, that its one outspoken foe among the candidates was defeated and its supporters elected, and that the results of the primaries are regarded in most quarters as a victory for merit principles.

The merit system is regarded with varying feelings by the officers and employees themselves. The conclusion seems warranted that, among the employees, its supporters are increasing in numbers as time goes on. As for the higher and particularly the elective officers, there was a great deal of opposition when the act became effective. Elective department heads often insisted that merit principles negated the fundamental doctrines of democracy, that the personnel office interfered unduly in the operation of their departments, and that their alleged responsibility to their constituents was destroyed through the intervention of the personnel office. Here, too, the opposition seems less determined than in the beginning. At any rate it is less articulate. It would be fatuous, however, to insist that the merit system has come to be accepted without question among all the departments.

It is quite likely that the merit system will be a leading issue in the legislative campaigns of 1938. It would be foolhardy, of course, to predict the outcome of these contests, but friends of the system feel that they have met successfully their major test and that, barring untoward developments, they will weather the forthcoming storm.

Merge Units of Local Government in England and Wales

Action under 1929 local government act results in marked decrease in number of governmental units

JOHN A. FAIRLIE *University of Illinois*

A COMPREHENSIVE review and revision of local government areas in England and Wales has been carried on during the last few years in accordance with provisions of the local government act of 1929. The general result has been a substantial reduction in the number of urban districts, rural districts, and rural parishes, and numerous changes in the boundaries of county boroughs, other boroughs, urban and rural districts, and parishes, as shown in the table below.

To summarize, the number of urban districts has been reduced by 132 or 16 per cent, the number of rural districts by 164 or 25 per cent, and the number of rural parishes by 1600 or 12 per cent. Alterations of boundaries, for the most part extensions, have been made for about half of the county boroughs and three-fourths of other boroughs. The changes in county boroughs have meant corresponding changes in the boundaries of the administrative counties.

Some account of the process by which these extensive changes have been made should be of interest, and may offer suggestions as to methods by which needed changes may be made in other countries.

Section 46 of the local government act of 1929 provides for a first general review of districts by county councils. After conference with the councils of other local authorities each county council was to report to the minister of health, by April 1, 1932, or a later date to be determined by the minister, with proposals for changes. These might include alterations in the boundaries of county boroughs, if the county borough council agreed. The minister was required to send copies of the proposals to the councils of districts affected; and to consider the proposals and any representations made by local authorities or local government electors affected; and may make orders giving effect to the proposals, or any of them, with or without modification. If objections to the proposals are made and not withdrawn a local inquiry must first be held.

If no proposals for change are made by any county council, the minister may make proposals and, if objections are made and not withdrawn after a local inquiry, may make an order for changes.

	Former number	Number altered	Number abolished	Number created	Present number
County boroughs		40	0		83
Boroughs		186	0		255
Urban districts	785		180	48	653
Rural Districts	646		230	66	482
Rural parishes	12,800		1,600 (net)		11,200

All orders for changes are required to be laid before Parliament as soon as may be after they are made.

Another clause authorizes the minister to make orders to remove difficulties up to December 1, 1930. Such orders were to be laid before Parliament and cease to operate after three months unless approved by resolution of both houses of Parliament.

The local government act of 1933, which consolidated the laws on local government, contains other similar provisions for the alteration of particular urban and rural districts and parishes (sections 141, 142), for the adjustment of boundaries of counties and county boroughs (section 143), and for further reviews of county districts after ten years from the first review (section 146).

To assist in carrying out the provisions of section 46 of the act of 1929, the ministry of health in September 1929 issued to local councils a memorandum (L.G.A. 24), outlining the procedure to be followed in reviewing the areas of county districts, the considerations to be taken into account, information required by the minister and additional information which the county councils might find it desirable to obtain, advice on special matters, the form of proposals, maps, the deposit and distribution of documents, and notice and representations.

The procedure suggested was for preliminary informal conferences with other local authorities, the drafting of tentative proposals for further consideration, leading to the proposals to be submitted to the minister. Considerations to be taken into account included the financial strength of the proposed areas, the wishes of the inhabitants, the equity of local burdens, and community of interest. An appendix to this memorandum presented blank forms for information and other matters.

In February 1931 the ministry of health issued a further memorandum (L.G.A. 42), supplementing that of September 1929, with additional suggestions as to procedure, considerations to be taken into account, and other matters—the latter including suggestions relating to education, the effect of deurbanization on the general exchequer grant of an urban district, unclassified roads in rural areas added to urban areas, the housing penny rate, special rates in rural parishes, the employment of counsel and expert witnesses, the number of rural district councillors, the names of new districts, and the adjustments of property and liabilities.

MANY PROPOSALS MADE

In the year 1930-31 reviews and proposals were received for the whole of four counties and parts of three others. Orders were issued in six cases. By the end of the next year (March 31, 1932), the date named in the act of 1929 for the submission of proposals, complete proposals had been received from twenty-one counties, partial proposals from five others, and two counties reported that no changes were recommended. During this year five local inquiries were held and seven orders were issued, making a total of 330 alterations in the areas of local districts. By March 31, 1933, a total of fifty counties had submitted complete proposals and one county partial proposals. During this year (1932-33) thirty-three local inquiries were held, eleven orders were made, and the minister had decided five other cases. Proposals from two counties had been referred back for further consideration.

In the year 1933-34 fifteen local inquiries were held, thirty orders were made, and decisions reached in six other cases. By the end of this year a

total of sixty-three orders had been made affecting forty-one counties. In Cornwall the number of urban and rural districts had been reduced from thirty to eighteen, in Cumberland from twenty-one to eleven, and in Sussex from twenty to eleven. In many counties the number of parishes had been largely reduced. Agreements had been reached for the extension of twenty-one county boroughs and were proposed for seven others.

In the year 1934-35 twenty-two orders were made and in 1935-36, eight more.

The operation of this procedure may be further illustrated by an examination of the documents for several counties. The magnitude of the problem is suggested by the bulk of the documents. The proposals submitted by four counties formed documents ranging from 41 to 227 pages of folio size. The orders issued by the minister of health for these counties ranged from 44 to 149 pages of standard octavo size.

The proposals submitted by the West Sussex county council in June 1932 provided for extensions of the city of Chichester, the municipal borough of Worthing, and three urban districts; alterations of eight rural districts, including two cases where two districts were united, reducing the number of rural districts from eight to six; and alterations of fifty-two parishes including twenty-one cases where parishes were united, the addition of detached portions of parishes to neighboring parishes, the transfer of parishes from one rural district to another, and other alterations of parish boundaries. Twenty parishes were to be reduced in area, eighteen to be increased, and six were both reduced and increased. The main proposals were followed by consequential proposals relating to wards, county electoral divisions, petty sessional divisions, coroners' districts, and other matters.

The greater part of the document contained detailed statistical tables relating to the various areas in the county and the proposed changes. A map showing the existing and proposed boundaries was also included.

RESULTS IN WEST SUSSEX

The order of the minister relating to the county of West Sussex is a pamphlet of sixty-eight pages dated March 8, 1933. A preamble states the main features of the county council's proposals, and notes that copies of the proposals had been sent to the authorities affected and notice published, and that a local inquiry had been held and a report made by an inspector, and that the minister had decided to make the following order giving effect to the proposals, subject to certain modifications. The order then states the main alterations in boroughs, urban districts, rural districts, and parishes, but the precise areas are indicated by references to maps. Particular modifications of the county council's proposals are not stated. The number of cases where parishes were united, listed in a schedule, is nineteen, while the county council had proposed twenty-one. Further parts of the order deal with members of local authorities and elections; administration of justice, coroners, roads and county administration; dissolution of authorities, property liabilities, etc.; local acts, provisional orders, adoptive acts, by-laws, etc.; rating and valuation; officers; and supplementary. Fourteen schedules supply additional details.

The review and proposals of the Derbyshire county council, submitted in August 1932, is a bulky document of 191 folio pages. All of the councils of the county districts, parish councils, and parish meetings were given an opportunity to make proposals, conferences were held with the council of each of the county districts, and with represen-

tatives of many parish councils and parish meetings, and consultations with the adjoining county boroughs of Burton-upon-Trent, Derby, and the city of Sheffield.

The proposals included small additions to the county boroughs of Burton upon Trent and Derby; additions to three municipal boroughs and nine urban districts; the union of six urban districts into two, the transfer of five urban districts to rural districts, and the creation of one new urban district; the union of six rural districts into three, and the division of one rural district into two; with other alterations of rural districts and parishes and the union of parishes. These proposals would reduce the number of urban districts from twenty-one to thirteen, and the number of rural districts from thirteen to ten.

DERBYSHIRE PROPOSALS

Two orders were issued by the minister of health for Derbyshire, one on February 23, 1934, and the other on February 16, 1935. The first order covered the greater part of the county; and the second dealt with several urban and rural districts not covered by the first order.

Two changes from the county council's proposals, of some importance, may be noted in the minister's order. The proposal for the division of one rural district into two is not included in the order, and the order provides for a new urban district not included in the proposals.

The review and proposals of the Kent county council forms another bulky document. A special committee was appointed for study of the problems. Letters were sent to adjoining county boroughs and to the borough, urban and rural district councils in the county, asking them to submit proposals for consideration. After a preliminary survey conferences were held at nine places between representatives of the county council, the county districts and parishes affected by the proposals, and the county boroughs of Canterbury and Croydon; in some cases an inspection was made of the areas affected. Following these conferences tentative views were framed and circulated to secure further observations and further conferences were held. As a result the proposals submitted to the minister were formulated and were approved by the county council on November 18, 1931.

The number and general nature of the changes proposed are shown in the following table:

	Authorities existing	Authorities created	Authorities ceasing to exist as such	Authorities proposed	Boundaries altered	Boundaries not altered
Administrative Areas						
Boroughs	19	..	..	19	14	5
Urban districts	23	3	5	21	19	4
Rural districts	23	3	8	18	21	2
Totals	65	6	13	58	54	11
Civil parishes						
Borough	31	5	17	19	28	3
Urban	23	6	8	21	19	4
Rural	357	5	66	296	209	147
Totals	411	16	91	336	256	154
Detached parts of civil parishes						
Urban	8	..	8	..	8	..
Rural	88	..	88	..	88	..
Totals	96	..	96	..	96	..

It will be noted that no changes were proposed in the boundaries between county boroughs and the administrative county; but changes were proposed in the boundaries of fourteen boroughs, nineteen urban districts, and twenty-one rural districts, a total of fifty-four of the sixty-five existing areas. Five urban districts and eight rural districts were to be absorbed and three new urban districts and three new rural districts to be created, a net reduction of such districts from forty-six to thirty-nine. The boundaries of 256 of 411 existing parishes were to be altered, including the absorption of eighty-eight detached parts of parishes; ninety-one parishes were to cease to exist and sixteen new parishes were created. The proposals also included a consideration of consequential matters, relating to other areas and authorities, and problems of rating and valuation.

While these proposals were among those first submitted, it was not until March 2, 1934, that the minister issued an order dealing with a large part of the county; and a year later (February 21, 1935) another order dealt with most of the remaining portion. This delay may be explained by the numerous and extensive changes proposed.

These orders provide for the abolition of six urban districts, eight rural districts, sixty-three parish authorities, and sixteen other authorities; for the creation of two new urban districts, three new rural districts, and thirteen new parishes; and for many alterations in the boundaries of boroughs, urban and rural districts, and parishes. One new urban district proposed by the county council was not created; one urban district was abolished in addition to those proposed by the county councils; and the number of parish authorities abolished is twenty-eight less than those proposed by the county council. With other modifications in minor alterations, it appears that the orders of the minister varied to a considerable extent from the proposals of the county council.

The annual report of the minister of health for 1935-36 states that eight county review orders had been issued during the year, relating to the counties of Chester, Durham, Essex, Gloucester, Leicester, Salop, York west riding, and Lincoln (parts of Kesteven). The principal changes made by these orders were:

Chester: Alterations in the boundaries of the city and county borough of Chester, the county borough of Stockport, four boroughs, twelve urban districts, and eight rural districts; the extension of three boroughs and seven urban districts; the abolition of six urban districts and one rural district; the creation of one new urban district.

Durham: The extension of the county borough of Gateshead, one borough and two urban districts; alterations of boundaries of the county borough of South Shields, one borough, two urban districts, and three rural districts; the abolition of one rural district; and the creation of one new rural district.

Essex: The extension of two urban districts; alterations of boundaries of one rural district; the abolition of three urban districts and one rural district; the creation of one new urban district.

Gloucester: Alterations of boundaries of one urban district and one rural district.

Leicester: Alterations of boundaries of the city and county borough of Leicester, six urban districts, six rural districts; the extension of one borough; and the abolition of one rural district.

Lincoln (parts of Kesteven): The extension of one borough, one urban district, and two rural districts; alterations of boundaries of one urban district and five rural districts; and the

abolition of three urban districts and one rural district.

Salop: Extensions of one rural district and abolition of one rural district.

York, West Riding: Extensions of the county borough of Doncaster, and the city and county borough of Wakefield; alterations of boundaries of the county borough of Rotherham, three urban districts, and two rural districts; and the abolition of one urban district.

This report also notes other changes in local districts during the year, not in connection with the general county reviews, as follows: a local act for the extension of the county borough and parish of Sunderland; a provisional order (confirmed by Parliament) for the alteration of the boundaries of the counties of Chester and Derby; an order for altering the boundary between the county of Surrey and the county borough of Croydon, under section 143 (2) of the local government act of 1933; and fifteen county council orders, approved by the minister, altering boundaries of urban and rural districts in nine counties: Berks, Cornwall, East Sussex, Leicester (six orders), Middlesex, Stafford, Surrey (two orders), Westmoreland, and York, east riding.

The first series of county reviews is approaching completion. Ninety-three orders had been issued by March 31, 1936, covering all but parts of four counties; by April 1, 1937, only part of the west riding of Yorkshire remained, and the order for this will come into operation by April 1, 1938.[1]

In other matters before the ministry of health, orders of the minister in a number of cases have been delayed, and in some cases permanently restrained, by proceedings in the law courts. In the matter of county review orders only three cases have been delayed by court proceedings and none of them were successful.[2]

The Purfleet urban district council in 1934 applied for writs of prohibition, certiorari, and mandamus in the case of the amended proposals for Essex County, which had been submitted at the request of the minister. It was urged that the county council had no power to amend its proposals, and that it had not held conferences before submitting the amended proposals. Objection was also made on the ground that the proposals had been submitted after the date named in the statute without a formal extension of time by the minister. Following the ruling of the high court upholding the order, this case was carried to the court of appeal and the House of Lords, both of which sustained the ruling of the high court.

The Newhaven rural district council in 1934 applied for a mandamus to compel consideration of a proposed addition to the county borough of Brighton, which the council of the county borough had agreed to, but not the county council. But this case was also disallowed by the high court.

The Hampton urban district council, in 1936, brought proceedings in connection with an order applying to Middlesex County, on similar grounds to those in the Purfleet case. But this also was disallowed by the high court.

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[1]Attention may also be called to the report of the Royal Commission on Local Government on the Tyneside area, issued in March 1937. [Cmd. 5402.] This recommends the amalgamation of the city and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, three county boroughs (Gateshead, South Shields, and Tynemouth), three municipal boroughs, four urban districts and parts of three other urban districts, located on both sides of the River Tyne, into one municipal borough to be known as the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, with power over minor local services; and that the area of this combined city with the administrative county of Northumberland should be placed under a regional authority for the management of public health, education, public assistance, police, fire brigade, and highway services.

[2]50 Times Law Reports, 427 (10/5/34), 532 (23/7/34) and 52 *Ibid* 33 (24/10/35); 3 All England Reports, 169 (14/10/36); Report of the Minister of Health, 1933-34.

The Drama of the Commission Plan in Galveston

Member of famous "deep water committee" tells story of origin and experience with commission plan

I. H. KEMPNER — *Former Mayor of Galveston*

On September 8, 1900, a tidal wave from the Gulf of Mexico swept over Galveston. Galveston as a port was reaping the benefits of the achievement of the engineering corps of the United States war department in developing deep water permitting ocean-going ships to enter and leave its harbor. A city small in size had become one of the leading ocean ports of the United States.

The June 1900 federal census showed Galveston's population to be 37,389. Within a few brief hours, however, almost one-fourth (approximately 7500) of its population were killed by the storm, and, in the course of a few short weeks, as many more left the city because of grief over the death of loved ones, despair over loss of property, and inability to pick up locally the thread of their economic and social lives. The physical property loss totalled 60 per cent of all assessed values, but impairment of confidence and faith could not be measured in volume or value.

It is not easy to paint the picture of suffering and despair that entered into the hearts of the survivors of this disaster. Galveston is located on an island with Galveston Bay on one side, the Gulf of Mexico on the other. The highest portion of the island was about ten or twelve feet above mean low tide. The houses adjacent to the Gulf were mostly of wood so that the force of the water not only destroyed them but converted the wreckage into a floating battering ram which, impelled by wind and water, gathered greater destructive power. Survivors for days had to look into this tangled mass of wreckage, which blocked every street and opening, for the missing and dead. Burial of the dead was impossible: cremation on the spot was necessary.

The intensity of wind and wave was unbelievably brief in comparison with its power of destruction. When the writer left his office at four p.m. for his residence, salt water filled all streets to a depth of two or three feet but there were no signs of destruction, no appreciable threat to life and property. About seven-thirty, however, the force of the wind increased to hurricane proportions. Practically every wind gauge was broken since none could indicate a force exceeding 115 miles an hour: reliable estimates are that the wind's velocity was 140 miles an hour. The water rose rapidly. In little more than an hour, however, the storm abated—so quickly were the forces of destruction over, yet leaving a trail of havoc and agony.

Government of Galveston prior to September 1900 was but a repetition of the story of city government in other cities. A mayor and board of aldermen were elected at large by the entire vote of the people; expenditures invariably exceeded revenues; indebtedness funding bonds were periodically issued to cover the deficits of each two years. The city

was practically bankrupt even before its disaster. Default in the payment of interest on its bonded indebtedness was imminent. Scrip salable only at a big discount had been issued to meet current bills and wages. Factional strife, jealousy, and personal political objectives had become much more important than regard for the city's interest.

Gradually, after the daze following the great disaster, local leaders realized beyond any possible doubt that, if world confidence or even local confidence in Galveston as a city or as the great port of the southwest was to be restored, if the feeling of personal safety and recoverable assets was worth redemption, if protection to life and property against the elements was practical and could be financed, if the city or port's economic future was to be saved, some extraordinary action must be taken. The determination to surmount these obstacles had to be translated from ideals and aspirations into practical action by its own people.

There had existed in Galveston for many years prior to 1900 an organization known as the deep water committee. This self-constituted, self-perpetuating committee had been originated by a group of successful citizens who gave their time and their services without compensation towards capitalizing underlying sentiment in the great trans-Mississippi section of our country favorable to the development by the government of a needed port for the southwest. But when in 1900 the forces of nature threatened to destroy the works of men, the members of this committee assumed the additional task of finding means and measures of meeting the deplorable situation the storm had created.

They addressed themselves to rebuilding the credit of the municipality and of providing funds for the staggering cost of protective work. The personnel of the committee at that time consisted of B. Adoue, J. P. Alvey, Charles Fowler, Colonel Walter Gresham, I. H. Kempner, Major R. G. Lowe, Colonel W. L. Moody, George Sealy, and R. Waverley Smith.

COMMISSION PLAN ESTABLISHED

Colonel Walter Gresham, a lawyer and ex-member of Congress, had been an active member of the deep water committee in establishing contacts throughout the west and southwest as well as in the halls of Congress. It occurred to him to study the method of government of the District of Columbia, whose inhabitants have no voice in the selection of their governing body. This led also to consideration by him, Waverley Smith, and F. D. Minor of the organization and operation of the taxing district of Shelby County, under which the city of Memphis surrendered its charter and sought relief from insuperable tax burdens after its yellow fever epidemic. These two cities furnished the genesis of the commission form of government as established in Galveston.

A bill was passed by the Texas legislature providing that the city of Galveston should be governed by a board of commissioners consisting of a mayor-president and four commissioners. It was also provided that three of these commissioners should be elected by the people and two should be appointed by the governor of the state. Subsequently under influence of court decisions the charter was amended to provide for election, by the qualified voters, of all five of the board.

This board, so constituted, with nominal salaries, took charge of a bankrupt city, wherein 40 per cent of its population were either killed or had left the city and actual damage to property aggregated over $15,000,000—out of a total assessed value of $28,000,000.

With a floating debt of over $200,000 and a bonded debt of $2,800,000 confronting them, to which was to be added

at least $2,500,000 of bonds to be issued for necessary protective work, with only about $20,000,000 of assessed values, the commissioners accepted the challenge.

THE CITY RESTORED

The protective work of raising the grade of the city from about three feet above sea level to eighteen feet involved bond issues of $3,325,000. There was spent out of current revenues for repairs of municipal buildings, streets, paving, and other replacements necessary as the direct outgrowth of the storm, a minimum of $400,000, collected in four years from back taxes due on depleted values of property. In raising of houses, reconstructing sidewalks, taking care of shrubbery, Galveston individuals spent at least $2,000,000 of personal, as contrasted to tax, funds. In addition to this the county of Galveston spent $1,500,000 for the construction of a sea wall. Contrary to current belief, the federal government was not called on and has not contributed one cent to the protective work of Galveston except the structures erected in front of the forts and harbor of Galveston. Not one dollar of the principal of any Galveston municipal or county indebtedness (bond or floating) was scaled. Holders of city bonds were called on to accept 50 per cent reduction in interest for a period of five years; their principal has since been paid in full.

The task and cost of protecting Galveston from a repetition of disaster has been faced with the courage and confidence that was bound to beget success. Today the residential area of the city has been raised to a level of eighteen feet above mean low tide, higher than any water in the history of the island. The sea wall, designed by eminent engineers, has been thoroughly tested twice since 1900 with storms of great water force. Behind these protective works the city and port is deemed a place of as great safety today as any inland town.

The story of the success of the commission form of government in Galveston would be incomplete and unfair if it did not make full acknowledgment of the unselfish coöperation of the people as a whole: an exhibition of a spirit of coöperation and civic pride that is almost without parallel in the record of any municipality but which unfortunately prevails today only at a much diminished rate.

The question is frequently raised as to whether a city can be better governed under the commission form than under the aldermanic form. I answer frankly, "yes." The commission system is less cumbersome, affords opportunity to the head of each department to know its workings better, to come in closer contact with his subordinates, to assign and lay out work, to ascertain costs and check results with greater satisfaction to himself. It has the advantage and benefit of simplicity, which affords to the individual citizen greater opportunity of following the handling of municipal business in a really intelligent manner, thereby increasing and keeping active the interest of the citizen in his government, though it shares the inescapable feature that inefficiency cannot match integrity, and that graft undermines ability.

Objections to the commission form of government have been urged—that it is undemocratic; that it centralizes power and authority in a few men; that there is danger of such power in the hands of inefficient men, etc. I submit that the commission form of government is but a concentrated expression of representative (not pure) democracy. That it places great power in the hands of a few men, I admit, as well as that there is danger of such power in the hands of inefficient or dishonest men; but the safeguard is an active public interest and the more favorable opportunity of selecting good men. Instead of the voters having to know the record and fitness of a large number of men, they need ascertain only such record of a

limited few. The ticket is a simple one, if the election of commissioners is by the city at large, not the complicated form and mass of names which taxes the capacity of the average voter to unravel and select. The professional politician may be able to control his ward, but the control of the entire city is more difficult, and when the choice of public servants to direct municipal affairs is reduced to a reasonable number and made by the entire electorate, the influence of the ward-heeler in behalf of his henchmen is neutralized and dissipated, and the opportunity to the people of selecting men of known fitness for these positions facilitated and increased.

In the discussion of the advantages of the commission form of government the theory is frequently advanced that it is a success in Galveston solely because its great disaster awakened public conscience, causing the citizens to select good men and causing good men to be willing to serve. I deny that outstanding ability in our various boards of commissioners is wholly responsible for what we have accomplished in Galveston. The Galveston plan is simply a board of municipal directors, composed of a mayor without veto powers and four commissioners, all elected at large for two years by the qualified voters of the entire city. With the exception of the city tax assessor all other officials are appointed by a majority vote of the board, and as a rule no appointment is made in any department except on recommendation of the commissioner in charge of such department. No commissioner can readily or plausibly shirk responsibility for the acts of his appointees, and instances of insubordination are rare. The budget under the charter becomes fixed for the year; disbursements cannot exceed the normal and reasonably assured revenue when once fixed; only by unanimous vote of the entire board can an item be increased or diverted. If only one commissioner remains honest and vigilant, he can, single-handed, turn the spotlight of publicity on every dark corner where graft and intrigue may seem to lurk.

Differences between the Galveston and other plans of commission form are, first, that in many cities the powerful influence of veto power is accorded the mayor; and, secondly, that there has been injected into the plan of many cities the populistic virus of initiative, referendum, and recall—the most dangerous and seductive brew that a municipality has ever been called on to quaff, which, like an insidious drug, will breed indifference and sloth, and create the illusion that we may neglect our civic duties at will, because with this potion all civic evil can be corrected. No greater deterrent to the progress of good government has arisen than this plausible theory with its slogan, let the people rule.

The satisfactory experience of Galveston and other commission-governed cities may well be considered as partly responsible for the later growth of the city manager plan, now in use in over 450 cities throughout the country and rapidly replacing the commission plan. This form of government calls not only for the election of a small group of councilmen or commissioners in which authority is concentrated, but provides also for the division of administrative and legislative duties—both of which fall to the commission under the Galveston plan—by the appointment of a competent administrator by the council to carry out its legislative enactments.

An efficient form of government, of course, will not render graft impossible, but it will make its practice difficult, its detection more likely. It will not stop incompetency, but it will reveal it. It will not create ability, but it will permit it to be demonstrated. Nor plan, nor system, nor form can ever take the place of that eternal vigil which must ever be kept over the defenses of our cities, that there may come within the gates none whose plan is but to loot and spoil.